Appln No. 10/611,353
Reply to Office Action of December 28, 2004

Amendments to the Specification:

Please amend the title to read as follows:

CINERARIASENECIO PLANT NAMED 'SUNSENERABU'

Due to the number and formatting of the amendments, a Substitute Specification showing the changes made to the immediate prior version pursuant to revised 37 C.F.R. 1.121 is submitted herewith to facilitate the prosecution of this application. Additionally, Applicant also submits herewith, a clean copy of the Substitute Specification pursuant to 37 C.F.R. § 1.125.

Applicant respectfully requests that the Substitute Specification with changes be entered in this case.

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SENECIO PLANT NAMED 'SUNSENERABU'

BOTANICAL CLASSIFICATION

Senecio cruentus x Senecio heritieri.

VARIETAL DENOMINATION cv. 'Sunsenerabu'

BACKGROUND OF THE VARIETY

The present invention relates to a new and distinct variety of Senecio plant named 'Sunsenerabu'. 'Sunsenerabu' is a distinct and unique variety, a dome-shaped plant with abundant branching, light violet inflorescences, and a long blooming term.

There are many varieties of Senecio cruentus cultivated in the world, including varieties with inflorescences of a single color of white, pink, red, blue or violet. Some varieties have marginal variegation with off color parts.

The female parent used in the crossing of 'Sunsenerabu' is a clone of our own breeding line, Senecio cruentus, '85-84e' (not patented in the United States), which is a compact, dome-shaped plant, approximately 16 cm in height. The stems are thick, approximately 8.0 mm in diameter, with no anthocyanin coloration. The leaf is in a serrated heart form with moderate yellow green coloration. The leaf size is medium, approximately 12.0 cm long, and approximately 12.5 cm wide. The capitulum is single flowered and has white ray florets with white disc florets having no marginal variegation. '85-84e' has some scent.

The pollen parent used in the crossing of 'Sunsenerabu' is our breeding line, Senecio heritieri (an unnamed plant; not patented or sold in the United States), which was first introduced from England. Senecio heritieri is a high, domeshaped plant, approximately 26 cm in height with abundant branching. Stems are approximately 5.1 mm in diameter, with no anthocyanin coloration. The leaf is in a serrated heart

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form and light yellowish green in coloration. The leaf size is small, approximately 5.5 cm long and approximately 6.3 cm wide. The capitulum is single flowered, having strong purple ray florets with vague white parts and strong reddish purple disc florets. Senecio heritieri has no scent.

The controlled crossing of a plant of Senecio cruentus '8S-84e' and a plant of Senecio heritieri (unnamed) was conducted at Omori-cho, Yokaichi-shi, Shiga, Japan in February, 1999. Seedlings from this crossing have been grown since September, 1999. Four strains were selected in January 2000 in view of flower color and earliness of bloom. After multiplication by tissue culture, the botanical characteristics of the selected new strains were tested in pots starting in September 2000, using the varieties 'Sunsenebu' (U.S. Plant Patent Number 12104, issued 25 September 2001), and 'Miss Yokohama' (not patented in the United States) for comparison.

One seedling was propagated by a cutting at Yokaich-shi, Shiga-ken, Japan. The new variety reproduces true to type in successive generations of asexual reproduction. This new variety of Senecio plant was named 'Sunsenerabu' (Senecio cruentus x Senecio heritieri).

The parent plants, Senecio cruentus, '85-84e', and Senecio heritieri (unnamed), are presently maintained at Shiga-ken, Japan.

In the following descriptions, the color-coding is in accordance with the Horticultural Colour Chart of the Royal Horticultural Society, London, England (R.H.S).

The botanical characteristics of the female parent plant Senecio cruentus, '8S-84e', used in the crossing of 'Sunsenerabu' are as follows.

Plant:

Growth habit - Dwarf compact Height - Approximately 16 cm

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Stem:

Thickness - Approximately 8.0 mm

Color - Moderate yellowish green (Near R.H.S. 139C)

Anthocyanin coloration - Absent

5 Branching - Fair

Pubescence - Sparse

Internode length at the middle of main stem -

Approximately 0.5 cm

Leaf:

10 Whole shape - Heart form with a swollen basal part, which is notched where the basal part of the blade attaches to the

Depth of concavity of leaf margin - Medium

Type of convexity - Acute

15 Apex shape - Obtuse

Base shape - Cordate

Degree of Undulation - Fair

Length - Approximately 12.0 cm

Width - Approximately 12.5 cm

20 Diameter of petiole - Approximately 5.0 mm

Length of petiole - Approximately 5.5 cm

Color of upper surface - Moderate yellow green (Near

R.H.S. 137C)

Color of reverse surface - Grayish yellow green (Near

25 R.H.S. 138B)

Anthocyanin coloration of reverse surface - Absent

Pubescence of upper surface - Present

Pubescence of reverse surface - Dense

Color of pubescence of reverse surface - White

30 Flower cluster (Gathering of corymbs):

Shape of flower cluster - Flat

Diameter of flower cluster - Approximately 20 cm

Height of flower cluster - Approximately 8 cm

Capitula:

35 Transected shape of capitula - Flat

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Diameter of capitula - Approximately 5.5 cm Diameter of entire disc - Approximately 1.2 cm Color of ray florets - White (Near R.H.S. 155D) Marginal variegation - Absent 5 Color of disc florets - White (Near R.H.S. 155D) Ray floret length - Approximately 2.1 cm Ray floret width - Approximately 1.0 cm Shape of ray florets - Elliptical Lengthwise warp of ray florets - Flat Concavity of ray florets tip - Present 10 Shape of ray floret tip - Rounded Number of ray florets - Approximately 13 Number of disc florets - Approximately 105 Diameter of pedicel of the first capitulum -

15 Approximately 1.6 mm

Length of pedicel of the first capitulum - Approximately 2.4 cm

Number of capitula per flower cluster - Approximately 75 Scent - Present

20 Phyllaries:

Length - Approximately 2.2 mm

Color - Moderate yellow green (Near R.H.S. 139C)

Anthocyanin coloration - Absent

Pistil:

Color - Light yellow (Near R.H.S. 11B)
Number - 1

Type - Style branches truncate (i.e., the top of the style is separated into two and the shape of the top is truncated)

30 Stamen:

Color - Brilliant yellow (Near R.H.S. 12B)

Type - 5 anthers are connate, with separated filaments Blooming period - January (Sowing in August) Hardiness:

35 Cold - Good

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Rain - Good

Heat - Good

Resistance:

Disease - Good

5 Insect - Good

The botanical characteristics of the male parent plant Senecio heritieri used in the crossing of 'Sunsenerabu' are as follows.

Plant:

10 Growth habit - Dwarf compact

Height - Approximately 26 cm

Stem:

Thickness - Approximately 5.1 mm

Color - Very pale green (Near R.H.S. 128D)

15 Anthocyanin coloration - Absent

Branching - Abundunt

Type of primary lateral shoot - Branch from every node

Pubescence - Dense

Internode length at the middle of main stem -

20 Approximately 0.8 cm

Leaf:

Whole shape - Heart form with a swollen basal part, which is notched where the basal part of the blade attaches to the petiole.

25 Depth of concavity of leaf margin - Medium

Type of convexity - Acute

Apex shape - Obtuse

Base shape - Cordate

Degree of Undulation - Weak

30 Length - Approximately 5.5 cm

Width - Approximately 6.3 cm

Diameter of petiole - Approximately 4.2 mm

Length of petiole - Approximately 7.5 cm

Color of upper surface - Light yellowish green (near

35 R.H.S. 136D)

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Color of reverse surface - Very pale green (near R.H.S.128D)

Anthocyanin coloration of reverse surface - Absent Pubescence of upper surface - Dense

Pubescence of reverse surface - Dense

Color of pubescence of reverse surface - White

Flower cluster (Gathering of corymbs):

Shape of flower cluster - Uneven

Diameter of flower cluster - Approximately 18 cm

10 Height of flower cluster - Approximately 15 cm Capitula:

Transected shape of capitula - Flat

Diameter of capitula - Approximately 4.8 cm

Diameter of entire disc - Approximately 0.9 cm

15 Color of ray florets - Strong purple (near R.H.S.81B)

Marginal variegation - Present

Diameter of off color part - Approximately 1.3 cm

Border of marginal variegation - Vaque

Color of disc florets - Strong reddish purple (Near

20 R.H.S. No.72A)

Ray floret length - Approximately 2.2 cm

Ray floret width - Approximately 0.4 cm

Shape of ray florets - Rectangular

Lengthwise warp of ray florets - Flat

Concavity of ray floret tip - Present

Shape of ray floret tip - Acute

Number of ray florets - Approximately 13

Number of disc florets - Approximately 110

Diameter of pedicel of the first capitulum -

30 Approximately 1.2 mm

Length of pedicel of the first capitulum - Approximately 2.5 cm

Number of capitula per plant - Approximately 35 Scent - Absent

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Phyllaries:

Length - Approximately 3.1 mm

Color - Very pale green (Near R.H.S. 128D)

Anthocyanin coloration - Present

5 Pistil:

Color - Strong reddish purple (Near R.H.S. 72A)

Number - 1

Type - Style branches truncate (i.e., the top of the style is separated into two and the shape of the top is

10 truncated)

Stamen:

Color - Strong reddish purple (Near R.H.S. 72A)

Type - 5 anthers are connate, with separated filaments

Blooming period - End of January (Sowing in August)

15 Hardiness:

Cold - Good

Rain - Good

Heat - Good

Resistance:

20 Disease - Good

Insect - Good

The botanical characteristics of similar variety 'Sunsenebu' (Senecio cruentus x Senecio heritieri), used as a comparison variety, are as follows.

25 Plant:

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Growth habit - Semi- erect

Height - Approximately 33 cm

Stem:

Thickness - Approximately 4.5 mm

Color - Very pale green (Near R.H.S. 147C)

Anthocyanin coloration - Present; uneven

Degree of anthocyanin coloration - Light

Branching - Abundant, i.e., approximately 9 to 11

branches

35 Type of primary lateral shoot - Branch from every node

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Pubescence - Sparse
Internode length at the middle of main stem approximately 1.4 cm
Leaf:

Whole shape - Heart form with a swollen basal part, which is notched where the leaf attaches to the petiole.

Depth of concavity of leaf margin - Approximately 7 mm on average.

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Type of convexity - Acute

10 Apex shape - Acute

Base shape - Cordate

Degree of Undulation - Weak

Length - Approximately 6.7 cm

Width - Approximately 8.0 cm

Diameter of petiole - Approximately 3.1 mm

Length of petiole - Approximately 7.4 cm

Color of upper surface - Moderate yellow green (Near R.H.S. 137C)

Color of reverse surface - Moderate yellow green (Near

20 R.H.S. 138C)

Anthocyanin coloration of reverse surface - Present Degree of antocyanin coloration - Light

Pubescence of upper surface - Dense

Pubescence of reverse surface - Dense

Color of pubescence of reverse surface - White Flower cluster (Gather of corymbs):

Shape of flower cluster - Uneven

Diameter of flower cluster - Approximately 36 cm

Height of flower cluster - Approximately 18 cm

30 Capitula:

Transected shape of capitula - Flat
Diameter of capitula - Approximately 7.7 cm
Diameter of entire disc - Approximately 1.3 cm
Color of ray florets - Vivid violet (Near R.H.S. 89C)

35 Marginal variegation - Absent

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Color of disc florets - Deep violet (Near R.H.S. 93A)
Ray floret length - Approximately 3.2 cm
Ray floret width - Approximately 0.8 cm
Shape of ray floret - Rectangular
Lengthwise warp of ray floret - Flat
Concavity of ray floret tip - Present
Shape of ray floret tip - Acute
Number of ray floret - Approximately 13-15
Number of disc floret - Approximately 135
Diameter of pedicel of the first capitulum -

Approximately 1.0 mm

Length of pedicel of the first capitulum - Approximately 5.5 cm

Number of capitula per flower cluster - Approximately 65 Scent - Present

Phyllaries:

Length - Approximately 1.0 mm

Color - Very pale green (Near R.H.S. 130D)

Anthocyanin coloration - Present

20 Pistil:

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Color - Deep violet (Near R.H.S. 93A)

Number - 1

Type - Style branches truncate (i.e., the top of the style is separated into two and the shape of the top is

25 truncated)

Stamen:

Color - Deep violet (Near R.H.S. 93A)

Type - 5 anthers are connate, with separated filaments Blooming period - Start at the beginning of December

30 (cutting in July)

Hardiness:

Cold - Good

Rain - Good

Heat - Good

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Resistance:

Disease - Good

Insect - Good

The botanical characteristics of similar variety 'Miss Yokohama', used as a comparison variety, are as follows.

Plant:

Growth habit - Dwarf compact

Height - Approximately 19 cm

Stem:

Thickness - Approximately 5.4 mm

Color - Moderate yellow green (Near R.H.S. 139C)

Anthocyanin coloration - Present

Degree of anthocyanin coloration - Medium

Branching - Fair

15 Pubescence - Dense

Internode length at the middle of main stem -

Approximately 0.5 cm

Leaf:

Whole shape - Heart form with a swollen basal part, which is notched where the basal part of the leaf attaches to the petiole.

Depth of concavity of leaf margin - Medium

Type of convexity - Acute

Size of wing (swollen basal part) - Large

25 Apex shape - Obtuse

Base shape - Cordate

Degree of Undulation - Weak

Length - Approximately 17.5 cm

Width - Approximately 13.0 cm

30 Diameter of petiole - Approximately 5.2 mm

Length of petiole - Approximately 7.7 cm

Color of upper surface - Moderate yellow green (Near

R.H.S. 137C)

Color of reverse surface - Moderate yellow green (Near

35 R.H.S. 138C)

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Anthocyanin coloration of reverse surface - Present Degree of anthocyanin coloration - Medium Pubescence of upper surface - Dense Pubescence of reverse surface - Dense 5 Color of pubescence of reverse surface - White Flower cluster (Gathering of corymbs): Shape of flower cluster - Rounded Diameter of flower cluster - Approximately 23 cm Height of flower cluster - Approximately 17 cm 10 Capitula: Transected shape of capitula - Flat Diameter of capitula - Approximately 4.2 cm Diameter of entire disc - Approximately 1.1 cm Color of ray floret - Vivid violet (Near R.H.S. 96A) 15 Marginal variegation - Present Diameter of off color part - Approximately 2.5 cm Border of marginal variegation - Fairy clear Color of disc floret - Deep violet (Near R.H.S. 93A) Ray floret length - Approximately 1.6 cm 20 Ray floret width - Approximately 0.8 cm Shape of ray floret - Generally rectangular Lengthwise warp of ray floret - Convex Concavity of ray floret tip - Present Shape of ray floret tip - Rounded 25 Number of ray floret - Approximately 13 Number of disc floret - Approximately 86 Diameter of pedicel of the first capitulum -Approximately 1.7 mm Length of pedicel of the first capitulum - Approximately 30 2.7 cm Number of capitula per plant - Approximately 90 Scent - Present Phyllaries:

Color - Very pale green (Near R.H.S. 130D)

Length - Approximately 1.2 mm

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Anthocyanin coloration - Absent Pistil:

Color - Deep violet (Near R.H.S. 93A)

Number - 1

Type - Style branches truncate (i.e., the top of the style is separated into two and the shape of the top is truncated)

Stamen:

Color - Deep violet (Near R.H.S. 93A)

Type - 5 anthers are connate, with separated filaments Blooming period - January (Sowing in August)
Hardiness:

Cold - Good

Rain - Good

15 Heat - Good

Resistance:

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Disease - Good

Insect - Good

SUMMARY OF THE NEW VARIETY

'Sunsenerabu' is a dome-shaped plant with an approximate height of 39.5 cm in the blooming period. There is a branch from every node and branching is abundant, i.e., approximately 9 to 11 branches. The stem is approximately 4.9 mm in diameter with light pubescence.

The leaves are small, approximately 7.6 cm long and approximately 9.2 cm wide. The leaves are shaped in a serrated heart form with a swollen basal part, which is notched where the basal part of the blade attaches to the petiole. The leaf color is strong yellow green, with no anthocyanin coloration on the reverse side. Pubescence on upper side of leaf is sparse and pubescence on the reverse side is dense. The petiole is approximately 9.2 cm long and approximately 3.2 mm in diameter.

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The new variety has large flower clusters, which are high and flat in shape (i.e., the individual capitula forming the cluster are flat). A flower cluster means a gathering of capitula in a plant. The capitulum is single flowered with marginal variegation, which has obscure border. The capitulum has a flat transected shape (i.e., when the capitulum opens, ray florets are flat when viewed from the side). capitulum is approximately 7.4 cm in diameter, while the entire disc is approximately 1.3 cm in diameter. floret is approximately 3.0 cm long and approximately 0.8 cm wide. The color of the ray floret is light violet (near R.H.S. 91A), while the color of the disc florets are violet (near R.H.S. 90B). One capitulum has approximately 13 ray florets and approximately 149 disc florets. A ray floret has a pistil, but no stamen. A disc floret is tubular and has a pistil and a stamen formed by 5 connate anthers with separated filaments. There are approximately 180 capitula per plant. The length of the phyllary is approximately 2.0 mm. phyllary is flat and has no anthocyanin coloration. pedicel is approximately 3.5 cm long and approximately 1.3 mm in diameter. The capitula have some scent.

After cutting in July, the new variety 'Sunsenerabu' flowers at the end of the January in Omori-cho, Yokaichi-shi, Shiga-ken, Japan. The blooming continues from January to May, if under appropriate control. At a temperature around 15°C, the individual bloom lasts two weeks. The flower buds grow one after another from the axil. The flower is not self-cleaning because ray florets remain attached in a wilted and dry state as they fully matures.

The new variety has moderate cold and heat tolerance. The new variety does not die at around 0°C, but when frost occurs the cells can be necrosed resulting in the death of the plant. Usually, Senecio cruentus has a tendency of slightly reduced growth in a hot season, whereas the new variety has no problem growing in the hot season.

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The fertility of the new variety is low. Generally, Senecio plants have high fertility (i.e., bear many seeds per flower). In contrast, 'Sunsenerabu' bears no seed or very few seeds per capitulum. When no seed is formed, there is a part corresponding to a seed coat, which remains in an immature state, i.e., without embryo and endosperm.

The new variety, 'Sunsenerabu', differs from similar 'Sececio' varieties 'Sunsenebu' and 'Miss Yokohama' varieties and from the parental varieties Senecio heritieri (unnamed) and '8S-84e' in the following points.

- 'Sunsenerabu' is taller than 'Miss Yokohama', Senecio heritieri (pollen parent) and '85-84e'.
- The capitulum of 'Sunsenerabu' has light violet ray florets, strong violet disc florets and obscure marginal 15 variegation. 'Sunsenebu' has vivid violet ray florets, deep violet disc florets and no marginal variegation. Yokohama' has vivid violet ray florets, vivid violet disc florets and no marginal variegation. The female parent '85-84e' has white ray florets, white disc florets and no marginal variegation. The pollen parent Senecio heritieri (unnamed) 20 has strong purple ray florets, strong reddish purple disc florets and white marginal part.
 - The petiole length of 'Sunsenerabu' is longer than that of 'Sunsenebu' or 'Miss Yokohama'.
 - 'Sunsenerabu' has less stem pubescence than that of 'Miss Yokohama'.
 - The blooming period of 'Sunsenerabu' is longer than 5. that of 'Miss Yokohama'.
- The fertility of 'Sunsenerabu' is lower than that of 30 'Miss Yokohama'.

The plant height and flower color are the most distinctive characteristics of this new variety, 'Sunsenerabu'.

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BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

Fig.1 is a photograph giving a partial view of the new variety of Senecio plant named 'Sunsenerabu' planted in a pot.

Fig. 2 is a photograph of capitula of the new variety of Senecio plant named 'Sunsenerabu'.

DESCRIPTION OF THE NEW VARIETY

The botanical characteristics of the new and distinct variety of Senecio plant named 'Sunsenerabu' are set forth hereafter. The plants were observed during January 2002 at Yokaichi-shi, Shiga-ken, Japan, planted in 15 cm diameter pots, at an age of approximately 6 months. Plant:

Growth habit - Semi-dwarf erect

Height - Approximately 39.5 cm

15 Spread - Approximately 45.0 cm

Main stem length - Approximately 38.0 cm

Lateral branches length - Approximately 20 cm

Stem:

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Thickness - Approximately 4.9 mm

Color - Light yellow green (near R.H.S. 144D)

Anthocyanin coloration - Absent

Branching - Abundant, i.e., approximately 9 to 11 branches

Type of primary lateral shoot - Branch from every node Pubescence - Sparse

Internode length at the middle of main stem - Approximately 2.1 cm
Leaf:

Whole shape - Heart form with a swollen basal part, which is notched where the basal part of the blade attaches to the petiole.

Depth of concavity of leaf margin - The maximum depth of concavity measured from the average convexity peak height is approximately 5 mm.

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Type of convexity - Acute

Apex shape - Acute

Base shape - Cordate

Leaf margin - Palmately lobed, crenate and weakly

5 undulated

Length - Approximately 7.6 cm

Width - Approximately 9.2 cm

Diameter of petiole - Approximately 3.2 mm

Length of petiole - Approximately 9.2 cm

10 Color of petiole - Near R.H.S. 144D

Color of upper surface - Strong yellow green (near

R.H.S.144A)

Color of reverse surface - Moderate yellow green (near R.H.S. 138C)

15 Anthocyanin coloration of reverse surface - Absent

Pubescence of upper surface - Sparse

Pubescence of reverse surface - Dense

Color of pubescence of reverse surface - White

Venation - Pattern Palmate; color near R.H.S. 136D

20 Stipules - None

Flower cluster (Gathering or corymbs):

Shape of flower cluster - Flat

Diameter of flower cluster - Approximately 45 cm

Height of flower cluster - Approximately 17 cm

25 Capitula:

Transected shape of capitula - Flat

Diameter of capitula - Approximately 7.4 cm

Diameter of entire disc capitula - Approximately 1.3 cm

Disc floret:

30 Shape - Tubular, trumpet shape

Color (both surfaces) - Near R.H.S. N88B to 92C

Length - Approximately 8.5 mm

Diameter - Approximately 2.5 mm

Margin - 5 lobed, star shape

35 Petal apex - Acute

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Petal base - Fused Number of disc florets per capitulum - approximately 149 Color of ray floret (upper surface) - Near R.H.S. 91A Color of ray floret (lower surface) - Near R.H.S. 91D 5 Marginal variegation - Present Size of marginal variegation - Approximately 1.7 cm Border of marginal variegation - Obscure Ray floret length - Approximately 3.0 cm Ray floret width - Approximately 0.8 cm Shape of ray floret - Rectangular 10 Lengthwise warp of ray floret - Flat Concavity of ray florets tip - Present Shape of ray floret tip - Acute Number of ray florets - Approximately 13 Diameter of pedicel of the first capitulum -15 Approximately 1.3 mm Length of pedicel of the first capitulum - Approximately 3.5 cm Pedicel color - Near R.H.S. 144D Number of capitula per plant - Approximately 180 20 Ray floret margin - Entire Ray floret base shape - Obtuse Ray floret texture - Smooth, velvety Scent - Present 25 Phyllaries: Shape - Lanceolate Apex - Acute Margin - Entire Base - Fused 30 Length - Approximately 2.0 mm Width - Approximately 1.0 mm Color (both surfaces) - Near R.H.S. 143A Number of Phyllaries - Approximately 14 Pistil:

Color - Vivid purple (near R.H.S. 87A)

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Number - 1 per ray and disc floret

Type - Style branches truncate (i.e., the top of the style is separated into two and the shape of the top is truncated)

5 Stamen:

Bud

Color - Dark greenish yellow (near R.H.S. 152D)

Type - Each disc floret has 5 connate anthers, with separated filaments

Amount of pollen - Scarce

10 Pollen color - Near R.H.S. 21A

Time to produce - Approximately 6 months (cutting in July, flower in the next January, in Japan)

Blooming period - Start at the end of January (cutting in July)

Number of inflorescences per lateral stem - Approximately

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Flowering time - From January to early May

Hardiness - Susceptible to damage under 0°C

20 Diameter - Approximately 6 cm

Length - Approximately 4 cm

Shape - Globose

Surface - Pubescent

Color - Near R.H.S. 144D

25 Lastingness of an individual bloom on the plant approximately 10 days

Hardiness:

Cold - Good

Rain - Good

30 Heat - Good

Resistance:

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Disease - Good

Insect - Good

The new variety and Senecio cruentus have similar resistance to powdery mildew, leaf spot, aphid, whitefly, and

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thrips. The new variety, 'Sunsenerabu', is a tall type plant and most suitable for flower potting.

This new and distinct variety of Senecio plant named 'Sunsenerabu' was asexually reproduced by cutting at Omoricho, Yokaichi-shi, Shiga-ken, Japan and the homogeneity and stability thereof were confirmed.